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Nunes Opening Statement for Yovanovitch Hearing on Impeachment

Washington, November 15, 2019

Rep. Devin Nunes

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It’s unfortunate that today, and for most of next week, we will continue engaging in the Democrats’ day-long TV spectacles instead of solving the problems we were all sent to Washington to address. We now have a major trade agreement with Canada and Mexico ready for approval—a deal that would create jobs and boost our economy.

Meanwhile, we have not yet approved funding for the government which expires next week, along with funding for our men and women serving in the military.

Instead, the Democrats have convened us once again to advance their operation to topple a duly elected president. I’ll note that five—five—Democrats on this committee had already voted to impeach this president before the Trump-Zelensky phone call occurred.

In fact, Democrats have been vowing to oust President Trump since the day he was elected. So Americans can rightly suspect that his phone call with President Zelensky was used as an excuse for the Democrats to fulfill their Watergate fantasies.

But I’m glad that on Wednesday, after the Democrats staged six weeks of secret depositions in the

basement of the Capitol—like some kind of cult—the American people finally got to see this farce for themselves.

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They saw us sit through hours of hearsay testimony about conversations that two diplomats, who'd never spoken to the President, heard second-hand, third-hand, and fourth-hand from other people—in other words, rumors. The problem of trying to overthrow a president based on this type of evidence is obvious.

But that's what their whole case relies on, beginning with the second-hand and third-hand information cited by the Whistleblower. That's why on Wednesday, the Democrats were forced to make the absurd argument that hearsay can be much better evidence than direct evidence.

And just when you thought this spectacle couldn't get more bizarre, Committee Republicans received a memo from the Democrats threatening ethics referrals if we out the Whistleblower. As the Democrats are well aware, no Republicans here know the Whistleblower's identity because the Whistleblower only met with the Democrats—not with Republicans.

Chairman Schiff himself claimed not to know who it is, yet he also vowed to block us from asking questions that could reveal his or her identity. Republicans on this committee are left wondering how it's even possible for the chairman to block questions about a person whose identity he claims not to know.

The American people may be seeing these absurdities for the first time, but Republicans on this dais are used to them.

Until they secretly met with the Whistleblower, Democrats showed little interest for the last three years in any topic aside from the ridiculous conspiracy theories that President Trump is a Russian agent.

When you find yourself on the phone, like Democrats did, with Russian pranksters offering you nude pictures of Trump, and afterward you order your staff to follow up and get the photos, as Democrats also did, then it might be time to ask yourself if you've gone too far out on a limb.

Even as they were accusing Republicans of colluding with Russians, the Democrats themselves were colluding with Russians by funding the Steele dossier, which was based on Russian sources. Meanwhile, they turn a blind eye to Ukrainians meddling in our elections because the Democrats were cooperating with that operation.

This was the subject of a July 20, 2017 letter sent by Senator Grassley to then-Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.

The letter raised concerns about the activities of Alexandra Chalupa, a contractor for the Democratic National Committee who worked with Ukrainian Embassy officials to spread dirt on the Trump campaign. As Senator Grassley wrote, *"Chalupa's actions appear to show that she was simultaneously working on behalf of a foreign government, Ukraine, and on behalf of the DNC and*

Clinton campaign, in an effort to influence not only the U.S voting population but U.S. government officials.”

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After touting the Steele dossier and defending the FBI’s Russia investigation, which are both now being investigated by Inspector General Horowitz and Attorney General Barr, Democrats on this committee ignore Ukrainian election meddling even though Chalupa publicly admitted to the Democrat scheme.

Likewise, they are blind to the blaring signs of corruption surrounding Hunter Biden’s well-paid position on the board of a corrupt Ukrainian company while his father served as Vice President and point-man for Ukraine issues in the Obama administration. But the Democrats’ media hacks only cared about this issue—briefly—when they were trying to stop Joe Biden from running against Hillary Clinton in 2015.

As I’ve previously stated, these hearings should not be occurring at all until we get answers to three crucial questions the Democrats refuse to ask:

- First, what is the full extent of the Democrats’ prior coordination with the Whistleblower and who else did the Whistleblower coordinate this effort with?
- Second, what is the full extent of Ukraine’s election meddling against the Trump campaign?
- And third, why did Burisma hire Hunter Biden, what did he do for them, and did his position affect any U.S. government actions under the Obama administration?

In closing, I’ll note that House Democrats vowed they would not put the American people through a wrenching impeachment process without bipartisan support—and they have none. Add that to their ever-growing list of broken promises and destructive deceptions.

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